



State Veterinarian Announces Retirement

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Madison- After 27 years of state service, Dr. Robert Ehlenfeldt will be retiring from his positions of State Veterinarian and Division Administrator for the animal health division at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. "Dr. Bob," as he's known around DATCP, will retire as of January 25, 2013.

"I know I'm going to miss it," said Dr. Ehlenfeldt. "But it's time. This division is as solid as I've ever seen it. We've got a good group of staff who know their jobs."

Ehlenfeldt came to the department from private practice in 1985, starting as a district veterinarian in southwest Wisconsin. He directed the nation's first tests to detect and control pseudorabies. Dr. Ehlenfeldt, who's been state veterinarian since 2003, has led DATCP's animal health staff in accomplishing other firsts, such as developing the first livestock premises registration program in the country that helps trace livestock herds when disease breaks out.

DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel worked with Dr. Ehlenfeldt during his first term as Secretary and reappointed Ehlenfeldt to his positions last January.

"Dr. Ehlenfeldt has been a superior state veterinarian," said Secretary Brancel. "His scientific knowledge of animal health, his rapport with his counterparts in other states and his personal demeanor have helped him address some difficult issues over the years in a thoughtful and timely manner."

During his tenure, Dr. Ehlenfeldt has overseen the move of deer and fish farm registration and regulation from DNR to DATCP. DATCP is now a leader in fish health programs and education. He says Wisconsin is right at the top when it comes to dealing with CWD and other emergency preparedness issues. Dr. Ehlenfeldt gives all the credit to his staff saying, "Frankly, leading them is a pretty easy job."

Appointed by the DATCP Secretary, the State Veterinarian is Wisconsin's chief of regulatory veterinary medicine. The person in this position oversees the surveillance, prevention and response to diseases in the state's animal agriculture sector. As administrator for the Division of Animal Health, oversight also includes the local humane officer training program, rabies epidemiology and the new dog sellers licensing program. The division also works closely with animal health programs within the USDA and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

As for what happens after January 25th, Dr. Ehlenfeldt says, "It will be different but I have seven grandchildren who are looking for a grandpa."

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